

Dear Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Fishbein and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am from Greenwich, Connecticut, and a supporter of CT Against Gun Violence. I am also the founder of [Connecticut Protective Moms](#), a grassroots group of Connecticut moms helping Domestic Violence (DV) victims and their children safely leave their abuser while in family court as well as reforming family court law to include Coercive Control as a form of DV.

Many of our more than 150 CPM moms have been or are currently in family court proceedings to seek safety for themselves and their children while leaving an abusive partner. Many tell us their stories of fear and trauma, knowing their abuser has threatened them verbally or in writing to end their lives and/or their children's lives if they successfully leave them. HB-6355 is NECESSARY to strengthen the Extreme Risk Protection Law to prevent firearm homicide of DV victims and children. There are dozens and dozens of cases where DV victims, women and children, have been murdered, and by looking at the CCADV fatality annual report, most of those femicides are by guns. How can we forget moms like Jennifer Magnano who was shot to death in front of her young children after her husband lay in wait for her in the basement and then he turned the gun on himself....all because she wanted to leave his abuse and find safety at a DV shelter.

Connecticut was the first state in the nation to pass an Extreme Risk Protection Order law, in 1999. It offers a means of last resort, with due process protections, to temporarily remove firearms from individuals judged to be at risk of imminent harm to themselves or others. It has been shown to prevent firearm suicide and stop mass shootings. It is time to strengthen the law so that it works harder to prevent gun violence. In

particular, when the protection order expires, it should be a requirement that the subject is no longer at risk of violence before the firearms are returned. That is not the case now.

ERPOs are effective because even though individuals may legally possess guns, they can be dangerous to themselves or others. Background checks are a point-in-time measure that can't detect dangers that family members, friends and co-workers can sense. Individuals considering suicide often give some sign of their intentions. An FBI study of the pre-attack behaviors of active shooters found on average they displayed four to five observable and concerning behaviors that suggested the possibility of violent intentions.

I ask that you favorably report HB-6355 out of committee so that the General Assembly can vote to strengthen our Extreme Risk Protection law so that it works harder to prevent firearm suicide and homicide. Thank you for your consideration

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Sincerely,

Betsy Keller

Founder, Connecticut Protective Moms

Greenwich, Connecticut